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C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 00439

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CXDOHA:

ACTION: P/E
INFO: AMB FCS DCM RAO PAO DAO

DISSEMINATION: P/E /2

CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:MRATNEY

DRAFTED: P/E:APPYOTT

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6540

INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA 0022

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000439

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/30/2017

TAGS: PREL UNSC XH QA

SUBJECT: QATARIS WILL SUPPORT KOSOVO RESOLUTION ON PRINCIPLE

REF: DOHA 386

Derived from: DSCG 05-1, B,D.

¶1. (C) Summary. Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs told S/R Frank Wisner that Qatar "will support the same position you support" on Kosovo. He appreciated consultation on the matter. He said a Serbian envoy had tried to convince him to back a "middle way" -- but the Qataris were not swayed. The Qataris wondered how to overcome Russian opposition in the Security Council. The MFA's Assistant Minister suggested "listening" to Russia on the frozen conflicts on its periphery. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Special Representative for Kosovo Final Status Issues Ambassador Frank Wisner told Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Al Mahmoud, in their meeting April 29 that Kosovo will become independent. The question was whether this would occur in an orderly manner, as envisioned in UN Sepcial Envoy Ahtisaari's proposal, or more chaotically. Under the Ahtisaari plan, minorities would be protected and a system would allow for the return of refugees. "There is no way for Kosovo to return to Serbian sovereignty," Wisner said. On behalf of the Secretary, Wisner thanked Al Mahmoud for Qatar's support on this issue in the UN Security Council.

¶3. (C) Al Mahmoud characterized the U.S. position on Kosovo over the years as "very respectable -- we will never forget it." Our "duty" now is to help Kosovo achieve independence the "proper" way. "In the end our position will be clear," he said. "We will support the same cause you support."

¶4. (C) Al Mahmoud noted that he had recently met an envoy from Serbia who claimed that Russia, China, and Indonesia support Serbia's position. The GOQ doubted China was in that category, however. The Serbian envoy had tried to sell a "middle way." According to Al Mahmoud's account, he told the Serb such a path was "untenable" and tried to convince him that acceptance of independence, as the Indonesians had done

in the case of East Timor, was the better way. Ambassador Wisner answered that if there was any hope of a middle way, Ahtisaari would have found it.

¶15. (C) Al Mahmoud recounted how the Serbian president told Qatar's Ambassador to Belgrade, who was presenting his credentials, that Serbia would not use military force against Kosovo if the UNSC supports independence. Ambassador Wisner agreed that Serbia did not intend to involve its army and police, but rogue elements or extra-governmental groups remained a danger.

¶16. (C) Ambassador Wisner explained that Kosovo's day of independence would be just the starting point for the new nation. It would need international recognition and economic assistance. He said the United States looks forward to working closely with Qatar on these priorities, and welcomed engagement through our missions at the UN.

¶17. (C) Ambassador Wisner had met the previous day (April 28) with Mohamed al-Rumaihi, Assistant Minister for Follow-Up Affairs at the MFA and holder of the UN portfolio, and the Qatari Permanent Representative to the UN, Nasser al-Nasser, over luncheon.

¶18. (C) Rumaihi, who had a detailed knowledge of the issue, said that the GOQ held Ahtisaari in high regard and believed him to be entirely fair. He suggested some steps that would entice Serbia to accept the outcome of a UNSC resolution, such as: help fulfilling conditions for EU membership, an arrangement with the European states to offer a Schengen "free pass" visa to Serbs, and a plan to ensure that Serbs in Kosovo were well-protected.

¶19. (C) Rumaihi said that though under some pressure from Islamic states, Qatar did not look at Kosovo as an Islamic issue. Rather, it was a question of natural rights. He said that an endorsement by the Organization of the Islamic Conference at its mid-May meeting in Islamabad would be helpful, particularly to the Indonesians. Rumaihi suggested that Pakistan or Egypt propose language to the OIC on supporting independence for Kosovo, and encouraged U.S. engagement with Pakistan in the run-up to the conference.

¶10. (C) "How to satisfy Russia?" Rumaihi wondered. This would be hard for Qatar; "the Five Permanent members must do it," he said. The GOQ believes that Russia "needs to be listened to" on dormant conflicts on its periphery. Al-Nasser predicted that Russia would not veto a Security Council resolution. But the question of how Russia would "save face" remained.

¶11. (C) Ambassador Wisner said that the U.S. appreciates Qatar's support. The U.S. will seek a resolution early in May and will seek to work with Russia toward a successful resolution. "If we fail, we will talk to you about containing the violence," he said. But it was Washington's aim to do everything possible to prepare Kosovo for its independence. Ratney